

zigzags in varied colours, some of which were termed *flèches nettes* when in lozenge form. The arrow proper is so little in evidence in the prevailing sash of this type that it is to be wondered why it was ever known under the name of arrow sash (*ceinture fléchée*). The reason for this can be found in the oldest specimens, in which the arrow, often beaded, appears in full. In the early stages of the fur trade, about 1800, sashes of different types appear under distinct names on the invoice books of the North West Company, now preserved in the Archives of the Seminary of Quebec, thus: worsted sashes or belts of various sizes and prices, fine worsted belts, *ceintures à flamme* (flame-like)<sup>1</sup>, *ceintures à flèches* (arrow sashes), fine *ceintures*, common worsted belts, common belts, N.W. worsted belts, scarlet do., fine scarlet do. Eventually the name of *ceinture fléchée* (arrow sash) came to prevail to the exclusion of other names, such as *ceinture à flamme* (flame-like), although actually the real arrow sash virtually disappeared and the *ceinture à flamme* (flame-like) would more fitly designate the type later standardized at L'Assomption.

All these sashes, on account of the length of the strands, were made from the middle towards the ends; the garter being short, could easily be woven from one end, although it usually was from the centre.

The Assomption sash is so complex and so uniform in all its manifestations that it constitutes a compact unit from the standpoint of history and manufacture, and the odd specimens recently collected among the Indians within the former domain of the North West Company and the Hudson's Bay Company can form only part of the whole. This includes such sashes as the so-called Iroquois, Huron, and Micmac sashes of the Museum of the American Indian, in New York, of the National Museum of Canada, and of several other museums and private collections.

#### EARLY BRAIDED SASHES

Some of the sashes of the Assomption type, when they are old, have a story of their own to tell. Different from the others, they disclose the processes of their early growth and some of the features of the craft that later disappeared.

Among the sashes of this exceptional group are the "Sash so-called Acadian" (Plate VI), the "Beaded sash" of the kind worn about 1830 by the Huron chiefs of Lorette, "Sir Isaac Brock's arrow sash", made before 1812, the "Quebec sash", and the beaded arrow sash owned by Dr. Chénier in 1837 (Plate I).

The "Sash so-called Acadian", thus known for no explicitly stated reason, consists of four separate bands, each about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches wide, like

<sup>1</sup> M. l'abbé Provost, of the Seminary of Quebec, states that his mother, Rosanna Pouliot, of Ste. Anges, Beauce, used to give the name of *à flammes* to a type of weaving with dented patterns.

simple garters, the border strands of which interlock together at the edges. Each band consisted, like some of the Charlevoix garters, of about sixty double strands.

The "Beaded sash" found at Sillery, near Quebec, is even more definitely of the garter type, as the bands, each  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches wide, were made independently and sewn together so as to form a band  $5\frac{1}{2}$  inches wide. Like the "Sash so-called Acadian," it holds as many bands of arrows made from the centre and pointing towards the ends, and its middle consists of a puckering, split, diamond-like core. In this, as in many of the sashes with Indian tags, white beads are introduced or strung in, to serve as an outline for a part of the arrows (Plate VII).

"Sir Isaac Brock's arrow sash", now preserved at the Public Archives of Canada, in Ottawa, is the oldest known dated specimen, its owner having died on the battlefield in 1812. Although it shares in most of the characteristics of the later Assomption sashes, it differs from them to a certain extent. Its arrows are all turned in one direction; its core is yellow—not red, as usual; the zigzags on both sides of the core consist of exceptionally long parallelograms (called *flèches nettes*); and the colours of the zigzags on both sides of the core differ. Although the wool is twisted hard, as in the Assomption sashes, its texture is looser and rather elastic. Indeed, this sash must have been made before the trade form had come into existence, and for this reason it stands as a link, like the two previous ones, between the earlier and the later stages of development of the technique of finger weaving.

The "Quebec sash" which, according to Dr. Massicotte, is of the kind made for the Hudson's Bay Company, does not belong to the standardized form. Its pattern of central blue arrows runs in one direction and is followed on both sides by slanting lozenges (*flèches nettes*), red and blue, connected by thin lines; a narrow groove in the centre shows that the strands of both halves must have come together here for simple interlocking.

The other sashes of the first group, listed elsewhere as Assomption and Indian, are so uniformly of the same type that they differ only in size, date, and quality. Obviously they must have been made according to the standard style of the Hudson's Bay Company for the needs of the trade. The only noticeable variance in technique consists of a few exceptional cases where the split diamond or oval in the middle causes puckering, as in the case of Col. Eric D. MacKenzie's splendid sash, at Government House, Ottawa, and the arrows in the band point from this centre towards the ends (Figure 1, top). The difficulties that the workers experienced with this technique led to its gradual elimination in favour of the straightforward band of arrows running all in one direction.